activities in small farm economy. The plots so designated 231
are devoted, respectively, to cattle-grazing, hay, tillage crops 241
for human and animal consumption, and turf for fuel, and 311
rough summer grazing. Nearer the house is the farmyard or "haggard," in which the hayrick and turfrick are and other supplies, such as potatoes stored in straw bins, stand ready for household and farm use.

The house opens directly into the haggard. There are 231
the cabins, in which the cattle are housed, and the various 343
sheds and stalls, often built out of the dry masonry of the 351
house itself, in which the farm machines, traps, sidecars, carts, and other vehicles are kept. Hens and other poultry roam at will through the haggard and are fed and housed there, and in one of the sheds the pig or pigs find their quarters. As for the house itself, which gives orientation to the haggard and is responsible for the spatial arrangements in it, we shall have occasion to discuss it somewhat later.

Figure 8 gives a schematic view of the kind of farm called 231
"all-purpose land" by the Irish Land Commission. This view 241
is a composite and represents no single farm, but it is taken 311
from direct observation of many in Clare. It depicts a mountain farm in which bog land is included. Otherwise it would do for any area.

Figure 9 gives a schematic view of a house and haggard 342
also in Clare. This is modeled after a house in which one of 343
the authors spent considerable time as a guest, and is carefully and faithfully depicted. But it serves, too, as a general 351
plan for all such houses of small farmers.

The daily activity of the farm family and the daily work 512
which its members carry on center round the house and haggard. Even for the men, whose primary work lies in the fields, gardens, and meadows, work centers in and round the house for a good part of the year. A short sketch of the daily activity which may be observed in any peasant farmhouse will throw into relief the work done by the various

[text continues on p. 35]

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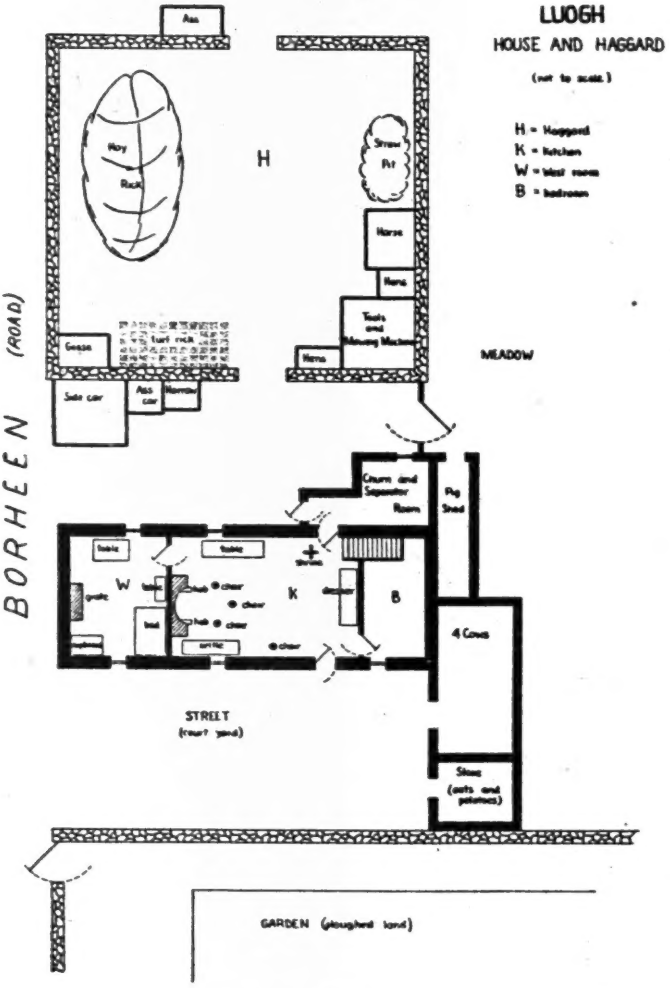
FIGURE 9



Schematic plan of a typical small farmer's house and farmyard, illustrating his familist economy and functional division of his household.

[p. 34]

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Clare

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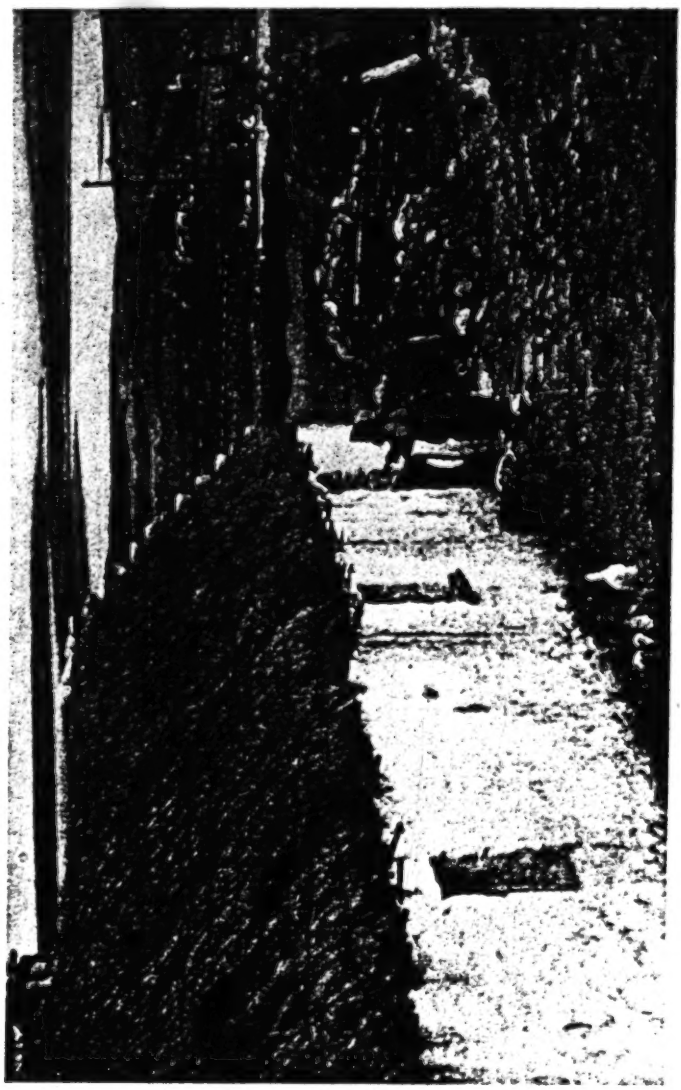

THE WOMAN OF THE HOUSE DRIVES HOME A COW

[facing p.36]

592 with this china only under dire necessity. In many districts
352 the year's supply of home-cured bacon still hangs from the
353 rafters.

● 343 From the kitchen to the haggard, the farmyards, and cow sheds is but a step through one of the half-doors. There are found the sheds and outhouses where all the livestock, agricultural implements, carts, are kept and the fuel supply and the hayrick stand.

513 Sleeping arrangements reflect the age grading and the
561 sexual arrangements within the family. Children generally
562 occupy the "loft," a boarded attic covering from a quarter to a half of the space under the peak of the roof. If space is restricted, they may also occupy the "settlebed" in the kitchen, or they may be divided up between the two on the basis of sex. Older children and the married couple will occupy the bedrooms.

353 The room, however, which we described as occupying
512 the part of the rectangle behind the hearth in the kitchen is of especial interest. It may or may not be used as a bedroom. It is generally so used only when space is limited. But in this room all the objects of sentimental value (except the shrine and the dresser in the kitchen) are always kept: the religious pictures, the ceremonial objects brought in by the bride at marriage, and the bric-a-brac associated with the past members of the household. Where there is only one couple in the house, this room is reserved as a sort of parlor into which none but distinguished visitors are admitted.
[523] The family heirlooms are there, and, lining the walls along with religious pictures, there appear the photographs of the members of the family, especially the familiar daguerreotypes of the last century. Whatever "fine" pieces of furniture
[352] there may be, such as highboys, cabinets, brass candlesticks, are kept there, as are all the religious objects used when mass is celebrated in the house. All these objects are inalienable
[425] in the sense that the family parts with them only when it
[428] Must. They descend from father to son with the house and the farm on which it stands.

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

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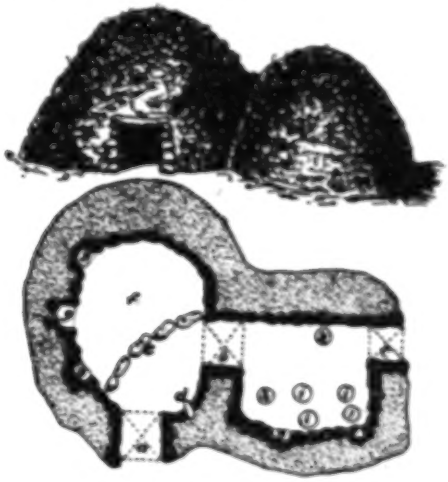

Fig. 2. A double both, the garry or summer pasturage of the tenants of Carloria, Uig, Lewis. From Thomas. A, b, c, doorways; d, fire-place; e, row of stones in front of the bed-place; f, the bed; g, g, niches; h, cream tub; i, i, i, three milk or cheese tubs, covered by slaty stones; j, a churn; k, a stoup for carrying water.

rious circumstances, that this *bo'h* was made about ninety years ago (from 1867).

With regard to Thomas's own comparisons, I will only add here that he has made a rather daring comparison between the *both* of Lewis and the Eskimo domed-shaped hut of Greenland. But perhaps a comparison of the grouping of the houses would be more effective than a comparison of the house construction of each type.[14] The Greenland hypothesis, however, seems to me to be worth studying. But at the same time we must not lose sight of stone-built huts and huts of straw, sods, mud and wickerwork, round or oval in form, used especially by cattle-breeding peoples in the Iberian Peninsula (*e. g.* in Estremadura, Andalusia, Granada), Italy and elsewhere.

Bee-hive houses of the *clochán* type in Ireland of today are to be found in some parts of the Gaeltacht (the Gaelic-speaking districts of Ireland), as on the coast and islands from Kerry to Mayo. There the stone-built bee-hive houses are used — not as dwellings, so far as I know — but as milk-houses or for storing turf etc. In the Dingle peninsula, Co. Kerry, bee-hive houses are still being built as outhouses. There are also modernised clochán with wooden doors — they can even have a glass ball to decorate the top.

343

The only stone-built and stone-roofed houses equipped with a fireplace and

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

343 a smokehole which I have found, was an ancient sweating bath, *teach allais*, in Co. Mayo. This building is square in form.

171 Thomas's material is however interesting from a certain point of view. From prehistoric times are found agglomerations of round, oblong and square houses in Ireland (*e. g.* Skellig-Michael), in Wales[9] and in other parts of the 341 British Isles. The same mixture of round and square or oblong buildings can be observed in Portugal,[10] Spain and elsewhere in Western and Southern Europe.

From Thomas's material we now learn what an *inhabited* settlement of this kind looks like. In Lewis, for example, the stone-roofed circular houses, *bothan*, have been erected in the same *gearrabhean*, i. *e.* place for booleying, as the timber-roofed huts, *aridhean*.[11] We are forced to infer that round, oval, oblong, square buildings must be studied with regard to each other and with regard to different constructions in timber, branches, sods, stone etc.

The *oblong form* of building can obviously have developed or been invented in a number of ways, as there are varying antecedent conditions in different cases.[12] There is however *one* oval or oblong form of building which may have its origin in the stone-built domed-roofed bee-hive house.

The construction with a domed roof does not permit of much widening of the space between the walls. Even if very long and suitable flag-stones are at hand, the limits for the cyclopean arch will make it impossible for the primitive builder to enlarge the circumference of his house to any great degree. To get more room he must put two or more circular bee-hive buildings together, or he must go over to the oval or oblong form. Thomas himself touches upon the problem in these words: "It is evident that in this style of architecture (domed roofed buildings) the size of the rooms is limited by the nature of the stone; and although a tolerably safe roof may be made in this manner with rough moor-stones to cover an area of six feet it would have a most uncomfortable and suspicious appearance if extended over twice those dimensions (six or seven feet in diameter). Even in the Orkneys where is abundance of flag stone, although there are chambers there forty-five feet long the breadth was only five feet."

342 To elucidate this important problem the Irish oval *clochán* offers us the most valuable material. I refer to the series of photographs, kindly placed at my disposal by the distinguished author of The Islands of Ireland, Thomas Mason.[13] This *clochán* (Clochán na Carraighe, Inishmore Island, Aran, Co. Galway, pl. 30 a, 31, and 32) is of oval shape, the entrance door being at the long sidewall. The roof is made of overlapping stones, one row of large slabs covering the space between the two long sides of the roof, which are

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Mayo

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[CAptions on p. 186]

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 171 These are formed of wooden posts, interlaced with branches of trees, like wicker-work, and covered on the outside with turf."

Robertson" describes a type of tenant's house, the construction of which must be like the wicker-work houses above-mentioned. "When such a house is to be built, the first thing done is to construct a coarse frame of wood, corresponding to the dimensions of the house, in length and breadth; then upon this frame to fix standards inclining inward, at proper distances, which rise to the height of the intended wall, and are kept in a firm position by being morticed in a tree above of the same dimensions with the tree below. These standards are closely woven with wicker work, to keep the sods from falling in; which, being built on the outside, finish the side walls of a creel-house."

342 221 As the Irish booleying custom, *buaile*, doubtless preserved many primitive and archaic building traditions, it should form an important subject of study also with regard to wicker-work huts. However, the summer huts which are mentioned in the Welsh laws are not referred to in the Irish lawtracts. Professor Mac Néill has kindly informed me that this does not mean that the *buaile* custom did not exist in ancient Ireland. "It was probably practised by the less opulent class who had a limited supply of pasture land. The laws have little to say about these, as in general they were under the jurisdiction of a noble."

342 343 The huts erected in later times of sods or turf and used as shelters for donkeys, pigs, etc., which can be met with in various parts of Ireland, would also well repay study. In the literature of the 19th and the early 20th centuries can be found travellers' accounts of such houses, although they seldom go into details about the construction. I refer, *e. g.*, to a description of Caesar Otway's from his "Sketches in Erris and Tyrawly", an account of his travels in Northwestern Ireland in 1840:

"The dwellers here were bog troglodytes — the foundations of their dwellings are sunk eight feet or more below the surface of the surrounding black bog, the walls are constructed of wet sods, cut off from the surface of that bog; there is no door or door-case, no chimney; the orifices by which the people enter, and through which the smoke *should* issue, are filled up as suits the wind, with bundles of heath or turf-kreels, filled with potato-stalks; a drain comes out from under the floor of the dwelling, from which the superabundant moisture escapes, or else it would be a common boghole: but, by its means, the water that springs abundantly from the sides and bottom, flows away, and the people sitting or standing within, are free from actual overflow."

3: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1938 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Galway

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a. Oval house. Inveran, Co. Galway.

b. Oval house. Inveran, Co. Galway.

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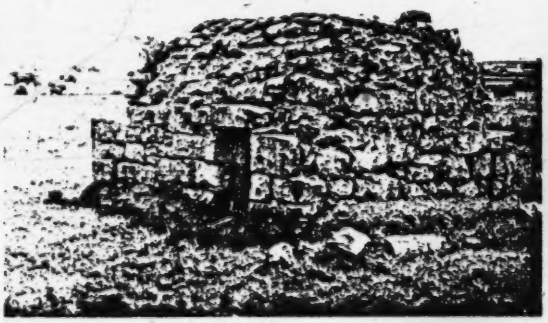

c. Sweating bath. Tuan, Co. Galway.

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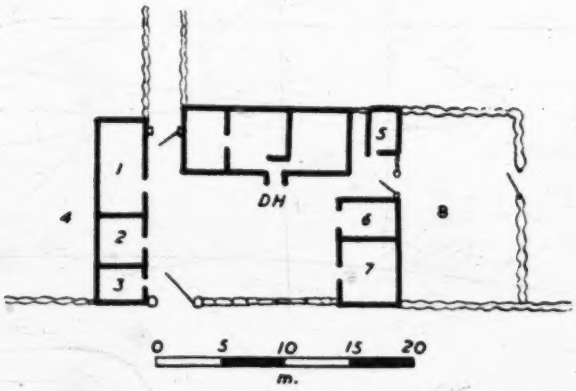

Fig. 1. Farmyard at Duncormick, Co. Wexford. DH, dwelling house; 1, byre; 2, calf house; 3, store; 4, manure heap; 5, pigsty; 6, cart house; 7, stable; 8, haggard.

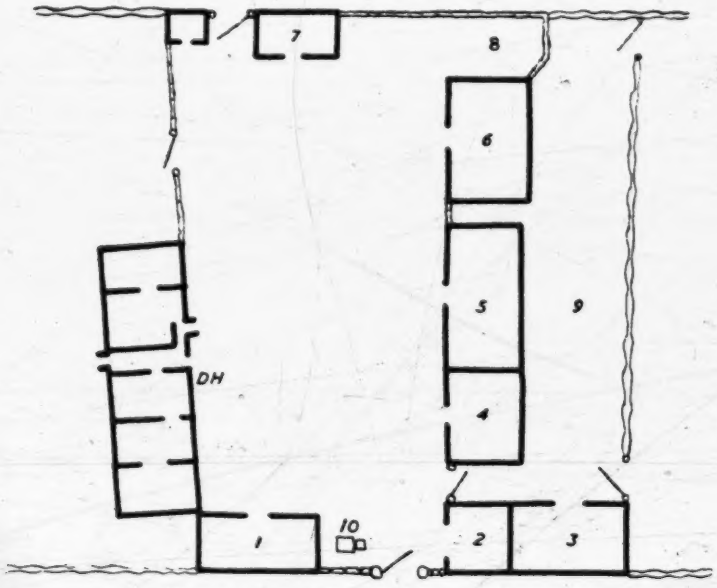

Fig. 2. Farmyard at Kilmore, Co. Wexford. DH, dwelling house; 1, dairy; 2, cart house; 3, corn barn; 4, stable; 5, byre; 6, store; 7, pigsty; 8, manure heap; 9, haggard; 10, pump.

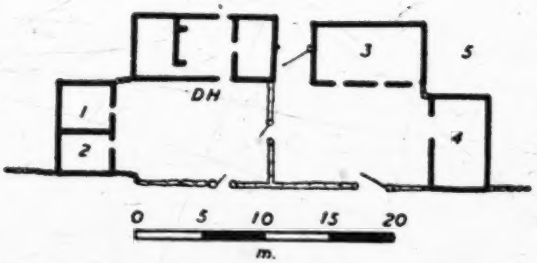

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Fig. 3. Farmyard, Killinny, Co. Galway. DH, dwelling house; 1, dairy; 2, store; 3, byre, 4, stable and carts; 5, manure heap.

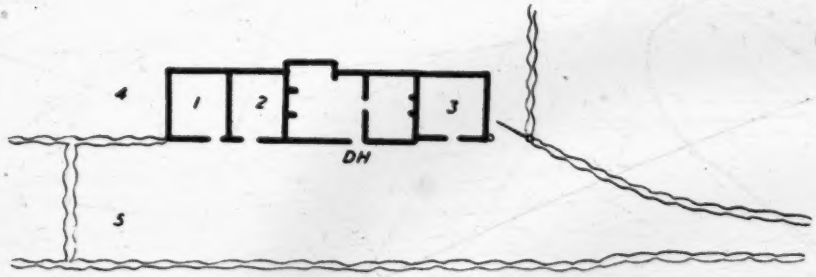

Fig. 4. Farmyard at Glenhull, Co. Tyrone. DH, dwelling house; 1, byre; 2, stable; 3, store; 4, haggard; 5, manure heap.

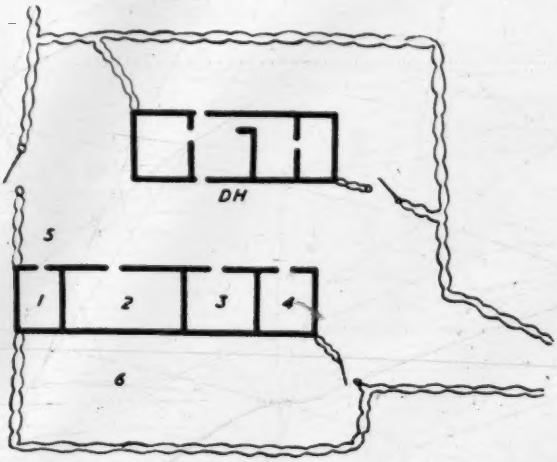

Fig. 5. Farmyard, Athea, Co. Limerick. DH, dwelling house; 1, pigs; 2, byre; 3, stable; 4, store; 5, manure heap; 6, haggard.

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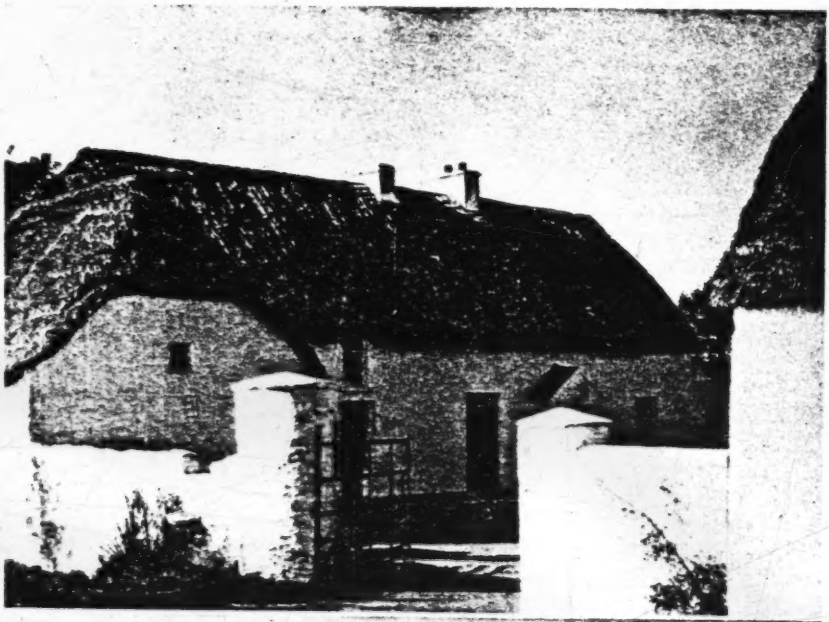

Fig. 6. Farmhouse and yard, Kilmore, Co. Wexford (fig. 2).

Fig. 7. Farmyard, Killinny, Co. Galway (fig. 3).

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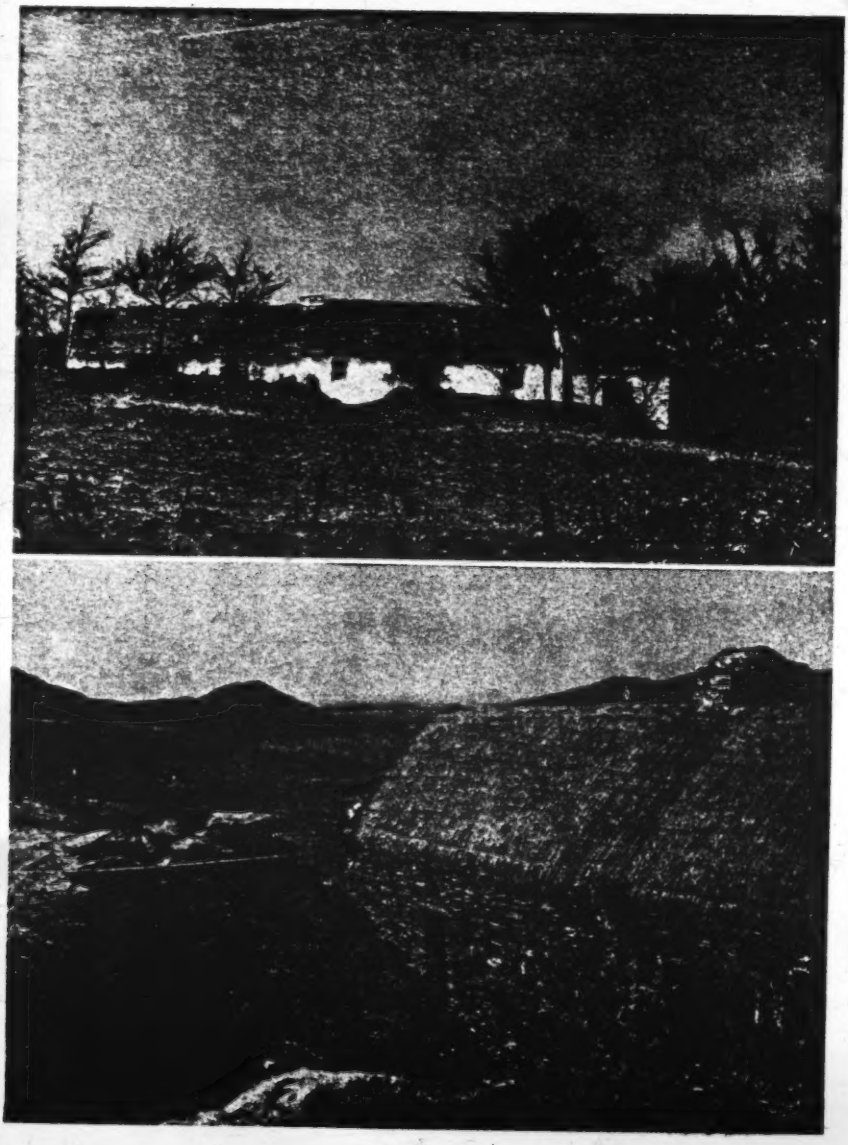

Fig. 8. Farm buildings, Glenhull, Co. Tyrone (fig. 4).
Fig. 9. Farm buildings, parallel lay-out, Lohar, Co. Kerry.

[p. 11]

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

among the hill pastures. In spring, after a long winter, the cows were often so weak that they had to be carried out of the byre. When sufficiently restored they were driven, together with the sheep and in some cases the poultry, to the hills. In Donegal, according to an account written a century ago, " the migration usually took place upon a fixed day, the junior members of the family generally perform the journey on the top of the household goods, and thus the chair or two, the creels, and the iron pot, the piggin, and the various selected *et cetera*—as if invested with a sort of dull locomotive power—creep along the roads. The little churn is slung on one side of the animal, into which the youngest child is often thrust, its head being the only part visible."

Many townland names ending in " booley " or " boley " assist us in our search for evidence, while in many places the actual remains of the booleys can still be seen. They were generally built of sods or turf, or of wicker-work faced with sods, and roofed with branches and heather. Some were circular and others square or rectangular, and the latter had two opposite doors through which, it seems, the cows passed in turn as they were milked inside, a tradition which is still kept up in the two-doored cabins of Co. Kerry, where Dr. Campbell has described how, in summer, the cows are milked in the kitchen, entering at the front door and being driven out by the back. The booleys were built in clusters, the inhabitants of a particular " town" presumably living together. Butter-making was the chief occupation, and the food of the herders consisted largely of " whitemeats " that is milk products such as curds and whey. Cheese seems to have been of minor importance, though sheep were milked and it is probable that, as is customary among the transhumants of southern Europe, the milk was made into cheese. The butter appears to have been preserved—it was un-salted—by burying it in wooden, skin, bark or cloth containers in the bog. This " bog-butter " frequently turns up in turf-cutting operations : it is white or yellowish in colour and smells like ripe old cheese. A keg dug up in Co. Meath was found to contain over seven stones of butter.

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

the 17th century, the natives withdrew themselves to the mountains, where they lived a life that some historians have mistaken for aboriginal nomadism. 221

The booleying tradition, finally, throws light on many of the customs connected with cattle and sheep, and helps to explain the absence of the dairy in permanent dwellings which formerly had to serve as winter houses only, most of the dairy work being done in summer. It also helps us to attribute to custom rather than solely to laziness and neglect the Irish farmer's traditional indifference to the fate of his crops during the summer months. "Spring and harvest time," we quote a typical 19th century observer, "are the only periods at which the peasants exert themselves, and then they work very hard; for the rest of the year they are idle."

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Rush "Frung" Basket

Fig. 18. Co. Antrim.

The old customs of tending ("herding") the cattle and tethering or spancelling them also derive from the rundale phase with its lack of field-divisions and fences. "Cattle, sheep, pigs and goats," wrote Arthur Young, "are all in bondage, their forelegs tied together with straw . . . . cocks, hens, turkeys and geese all have their legs in thraldom." Various devices for limiting the freedom of farm animals are still widely used: even the hen with her chickens around her will be seen tethered by the leg to a stone or iron weight. Where animals still run in common under the system of "sums" it is necessary to give them distinguishing marks. Apart from the well-known methods of branding or colouring the sheep's wool it is the custom in parts of Ireland, as in Wales, to ear-mark sheep by cutting or notching the ear with proprietary shapes. In Clare Island the geese are "tokened" by having holes punched in their webbed feet. Incidentally it is worth noticing that, so far as I am aware, the iron-tipped shepherd's crook is unknown in Ireland, a bent ash stick taking its place. "Gatherings" and co-operation are of course a feature of sheep-shearing and dipping. Sheep-pens of dry stone construction are often associated with ancient settlements among the hills: they are of various shapes and would repay study.

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9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

CHAPTER IX.

FARM BUILDINGS.

First in importance in this pastoral country comes the cow byre, which is often an old dwelling house converted or an extension built on to the end of the kitchen. We have seen that in the west it is not long since the cows were housed in the bottom end of the kitchen, and even now one gets the impression from the proximity of the byre and its smells that there is a reluctance to be separated by any distance from the beasts which play such a large part in the life and traditions of the countryside. Along one side of the byre, above the feeding place, runs the rannel- or revel-tree to which the vertical cow-stakes are secured at intervals: "thin as a ravel-tree" is an expression sometimes heard. Alternatively, in the west, the stakes are held in place by iron staples or perforated stone slabs let into the wall. Iron chains have almost entirely replaced the rush "binnen ropes" (Chapter 14) which were fastened to a plaited ring of sally, hazel or rowan—called a "woody"—sliding up and down the stake. In Co. Clare the animals were secured by a straw rope tied round the horns, and no doubt different methods could be described from various districts. Milking times also vary from place to place, and there is no topic about which so much lore might be collected as about cows and their products. It is commonly said that there is a right and a wrong side on which to milk a cow. In Ireland, so far as my observation goes, it is the right-hand side.

343 234 [184]

[p. 79]

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

343 234 Behind the cows there runs a slab-lined drain or groop, which carries the refuse through the "groop hole" in the wall to the midden. Hanging from the rannel-tree you may perchance see a charm in the shape of a perforated flint [776] pebble, while over the door, decaying Brigid's Crosses dating [751] back for several successive years show that the cattle are under the special protection of the Irish saint. In the byre gable it is not uncommon to see a dove-cote, at any rate along [235] the east coast where English influence has been strong since Norman times. Pigeons are fond of heat and thrive near farm animals. In Lecale, Co. Down, I have seen nests made of straw rope hung above the horses in the stable.

343 251 The barn is not infrequently built above the byre. When the dwelling house alongside remains, in the Irish tradition, single-storied, the effect of the towering barn is rather incongruous. This arrangement makes it simple to feed the animals, provides a springy wooden floor for thrashing, and also gives a better draught for the purpose. Moreover, the raised position helps to make the corn secure from damp and rats. The barn has opposite doors and half doors to regulate the through draught and to keep out stray animals while work goes on inside. Access to the barn is obtained by external stone steps or a sloping ramp, under which the stone dog kennel is often built in. Some of the activities and appurtenances of the barn are described in Chapter 14.

343 Little need be said about the stable, since small farms have as a rule only one mare. In the old-time single-roomed kitchen-byres, the mare had her stall alongside the cows, and you will sometimes see the keeping-hole above the back door where the brush and curry comb were stored. The stable, like the byre, may be attached to the house or may be separate, but for convenience and economy it tends to be built as part of a range of buildings. In decayed rundale clusters now occupied by only one or two holders there were, ready to hand, many old dwelling houses which could be put to different uses as "offices."

Before we turn to the housing of other livestock, mention should be made of the turf-house, for which many different

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

kinds of construction are employed. Some districts use strong 343
stone buildings—for example of the bee-hive style to be described below—others roofless rectangles of stone with one end open, and others again timber-posted structures with roofs and walls of many different materials. These supplies are generally supplemented by well-built turf-stacks, and it used to be the custom to build a great stack against the gable of the house, both for shelter and to keep the house warm. Turf-stacks were occasionally built hollow to serve as a pigsty. [23]
In the north of Ireland the pig is by no means universally kept, though most old homesteads have a building which once did duty as a sty, and in some parts of the country these are of bee-hive construction, so strongly built that they have defied the ravages of time.

Just as old practices live on as children's games, so certain ancient types of buildings have descended in the social scale in the course of history. The bee-hive corbelled huts and the corn-drying kilns are examples. Both are circular in plan and built of dry stones or stones and mud. In the Gaeltacht the bee-hive houses are used, from Mayo to Kerry, for storing milk or turf. They are made by overlapping the flat slabs of the walls until they meet at the top in a false dome—a style of building which, in its origin, long precedes the arch and is seen at its best in some of the oldest monuments of human industry in Ireland, the prehistoric chambered tombs of the Boyne [72]
valley. Not far from this metropolis of ancient culture, in the Carlingford Hills of north Louth, Mr. H. G. Tempest has shown me several corbelled huts, some of which are still used as pigsties, while in Lecale in Down there are many examples, both circular and square in plan, which have been used as pigsties and hen houses (Figs. 38 & 39). These are generally grouted on top and whitewashed, but those of Louth and the west may have a covering of earth which, growing a crop of grass and weeds, gives the little houses the appearance of natural hillocks. Similar pigsties are known in south-eastern Wales, and have been described by Dr. I. C. Peate in his book *The Welsh House*. Corbelled huts are also used as pigsties and poultry houses in Caithness and the Orkneys.

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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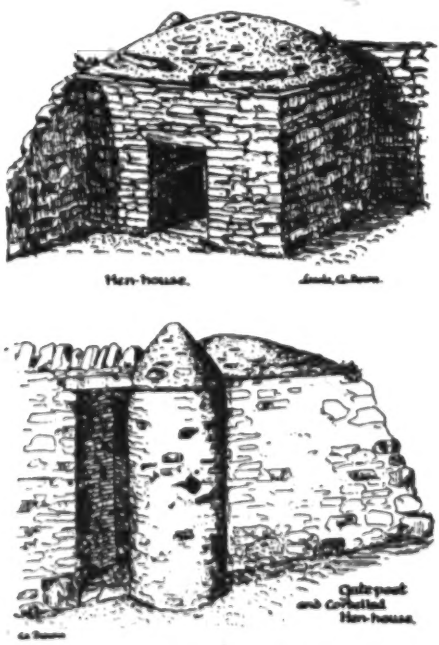

Fig. 38. Two views of hen-house.

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Some of the holy wells visited throughout Ireland for their reputed curative powers are protected by corbelled coverings of some antiquity: one may cite the wells at Struell near Downpatrick and Ronogue's Well near Cork. Domestic wells also frequently show some degree of corbelling, but free standing well-covers like that shown in Fig. 41 are rare. To the same class of construction belong most of the surviving sweat-houses which were resorted to by rheumatic cases, profuse sweating being induced by heating the interior with turf fires beforehand. In certain counties, for example Cavan, these structures are quite common and were used into living memory. In Rathlin Island I was told that girls would go to

[757]

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

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Fig. 39.

the sweathouses in order to improve their complexions before paying a visit to the Lammas fair at Ballycastle. It should be added that the treatment is said to have included a final plunge into cold water: running water is generally found alongside the sweat-houses (Fig. 40).

Such buildings are, from the simplicity of their construction, undateable: there is nothing to show, in many cases, whether they were erected a hundred, a thousand or even four thousand years ago, and though one suspects that many examples are no more than a century or two old—indeed the Gaeltacht turf-houses are still being built—they are in truth ageless. But the functions of the stone-roofed houses have changed. Once tombs of the dead and homes of the

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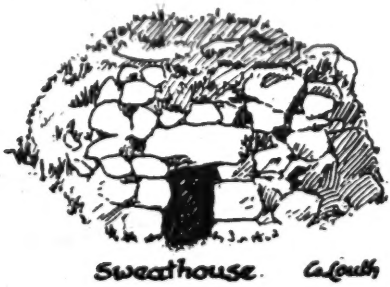

Fig. 40.

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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343 living, they have been relegated to lesser positions in the economy of peasant life. Apart from the well-known monastic cells of Skellig Michael and other early Christian sites, there is good evidence that oval "clochán," as they are termed, were built as peasant houses in stoney districts such as the Aran Islands. They have been described as having two opposite doors and measuring as much as 21 ft. by 12 ft., with the walls three feet thick. Dr. Campbell has suggested that the sloping hipped roofs of thatched houses derive from the corbelled ends of such oval clochán, and has pointed out that

Fig. 41.

some of the oldest surviving thatched cabins of the west are somewhat oval in plan.

While a full discussion of this interesting thesis would be out of place here, there are other possibilities in the shape of surviving structures. I have in mind the simple device known as the "flat roof," which is of widespread occurrence in Ireland, and which, from the ease of its construction, was probably common in very early times. It is employed on cart-houses and other outbuildings where the width is not too great to bear the weight of the solid roof. Horizontal beams and branches span the breadth from wall to wall and carry a superstructure of potato haulms, whins, old straw or turf and

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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similar farm rubbish, which is roughly thatched with rushes. In building up loose material of this kind, as in making a turf-stack or a potato clamp, the hipped form is naturally adopted (Fig. 42) and *cf.* the turf stack or rick (Fig. 93). I have often seen old houses or outbuildings with upright gables the triangular tops of which, above the level of the eaves, are built of sods or turf. While other explanations may be offered, it seems to me that this carries on the tradition of the "flat" roof and hints that it was more generally found in former times.

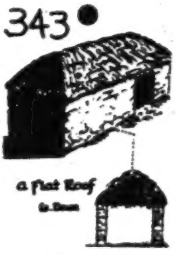

Fig. 42.

Corn-drying kilns were mentioned above as an example of structures which have descended in the social scale. It seems likely that constructionally they are miniature replicas of circular houses, and it is certainly true that they are now put to uses which cannot be called legitimate. They are used surreptitiously in preparing grain for making poteen, and I have seen examples built not long ago for drying a cargo of corn recovered from a wreck. A few generations ago every little village had its corn kiln, but the large kilns attached to corn mills have done away with them. So far as I have been able to find out the Irish kilns were all circular or semicircular and they were often built into a sloping hill. Some were open on top like a lime-kiln but others had a conical thatch. Again, one variety had the fire underneath while in another the heat was drawn along a flue from a fireplace some distance away. The corn was laid on a linen sheet resting on a carefully prepared bed of straw; hence the phrase "soft as kiln bedding." The dried corn was ground forthwith in a hand quern.

343
251

Although underground refuges or "souterrains"—called "caves" by country folk—come into the category of ancient monuments they deserve mention here for two reasons. The first is because they often show in their roofs the technique of corbelling described above. The second fact which gives them interest is that, though some are known to have been built in the Bronze Age, they have been used as hiding places at many periods. I have found in them "ammunition" of 1,000 years ago side by side with explosives dating from the

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9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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343 "troubles" of 25 years ago. Moreover underground "hides" have been constructed in recent times by poteen-makers. A description of a Donegal example said to have been made about 150 years ago will be found in *Antiquity*, June, 1939, p. 220.

351 361 Finally, something should be said about the disposition of the farm buildings, but this is a subject which calls for research. Broadly speaking the arrangement native to the country is some kind of long house, with the offices under the same roof as the kitchen and room. I use the word "native" because in areas of strong English influence such as Wexford what seems to be an introduced type of lay-out is the courtyard style where the buildings are grouped round the sides of a square. There are many approximations to this arrangement in various parts of the east and south of Ireland, and I do not think, as my friend Colonel R. G. Berry has suggested, that the type is native. Where the Old Irish homestead has a number of outbuildings these tend to be placed in front of and parallel to the dwelling house. Efforts to persuade the peasant to put his manure heap and his animals behind the house have, until recently, failed, for he likes to keep an eye on his wealth!

342 been built for almost the entire popula-
511 tion. In 1893 it was said that there
[657] were no outbuildings or cattle-sheds, so that peat was stacked in a corner of the cottage with the fowls roosting on it, the pigs in a pen beside the fireplace, the cattle in a pen at the other end of the room, and the farm implements and fishing tackle in the rafters.[11] Now the
● [343] old houses are the outbuildings, still thatched, with oat straw (not rye as formerly) laid on sods and tied down with home-made straw ropes weighted with large stones. Only five thatched houses were still inhabited in 1954. Some of the thatch has sprouting oats and some of it is rotten, but, when a roof is beyond further repair, it is all stripped off and the sodding and thatching begins again. Happily, corrugated iron is not used as it cannot stand the weather.

Farming

241 Agricultural practice is almost uniform: an acre or so is divided between oats, potatoes, and—in a few cases—barley, and there is generally a small patch of turnips, mangolds, and, less frequently, cabbage (Fig. 2). Onions, carrots, and parsnips were rarely seen. The ground used for crops is called the "garden," and its fertility is maintained by using animal manure and seaweed, and also by rotating the crops. Strange (or "foreign") seed is favored, and
[657] bought at a cheap rate under a government scheme. The remainder of the farmstead consists of a varying amount of meadow, generally 1–3 acres, and some pasture. The precious crops are
[231] carefully walled, but some of the farmers open their fields to the cattle and sheep after the harvest, partly as a means of natural fertilizing.
231 Each farmer has one or two cows and
439

[11] C. R. Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 355.

[p. 206(A)]

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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narrow strip between the boundary and the wall. 'Fights, trespasses, confusion, disputes and assaults, were the natural and unavoidable consequences of the rundale system.'[1] On the other hand we must recall the extreme reluctance with which the system was at last abandoned, the social benefits it conferred on members of the kin. The reforming landlord, Lord George Hill, comments that 'the pleasure the people feel in assembling and chatting together, made them consider the removal of the houses, from the clusters or hamlets in which they were generally built to the separate farms, a great grievance.'[2] Another writer gives as the basis of the tenants' grievance, 'the recollection of nights of social concourse, of aid in sickness, of sympathy in joy and sorrow, of combined operations of defence against bailiff or gauger'.[3] There were ceilidhes and spinning parties, and many a clachan had its shanachie (storyteller) and its fiddler or piper—usually a maimed or simple person—who accompanied with folk-tunes. Folk-songs, occupational airs and legendary tales were kept alive in this way. Apart from the co-operation implicit in the openfield system there was a good deal of sharing in other ways. Thus there would be a communal corn-kiln for drying the grain before grinding, a knocking stone for pounding barley, and in some districts a corbelled stone sweat-house which took the place of the village doctor in treating rheumatic pains.

The openfield which lay around the cluster, normally on the down-hill side so that the vital manure could be 'sliped' downslope (see Chapter XIII), seems to have been kept in cultivation in some areas at least year after year. This was the infield, in contrast to the outfield, the outlying rough pasture bits of which were temporarily reclaimed and then left to rest for long periods. We shall return to the plough and spade and methods of cultivation in another place but may refer here to the allotment of the holdings in the common fields. Although in many parts of the country the holdings, by the end of the eighteenth century, had become fixed in their scattered parcels on the several qualities of land in the openfield, there is abundant

[1] Lord George Hill, *Gweedore*, 22.
[2] Ibid., 42.
[3] W. R. Wilde, *Dublin University Magazine*, 41 (1853), 20.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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IX

KILNS AND CLOCHAUNS

343 WHILE the timber building has almost entirely disappeared from the Irish scene, there survives an archaic
333 tradition of building in dry stone which is best illustrated in the humble structures erected for special purposes in or adjacent to the farmyard. Since stonework has a much better chance of survival than timber it is possible, even without excavation, to trace the descent of some of these small buildings through the ages. They include corbelled animal houses (clochauns), corn-drying kilns, sweat-houses and turf-shelters. We shall consider also small outhouses of sods or wattles, including soot-houses and animal shelters. Some of these, reduced in scale and status, are the successors of buildings once erected for higher purposes.

The clochauns of south-western Ireland, corbelled stone struc-
172 tures, nowadays used mainly for keeping pigs or poultry, are indis-
343 tinguishable from the monastic huts such as are found on the precipitous island of Skellig Michael off the coast of Co. Kerry. Similar stone huts accompany monastic settlements in other parts of Ireland—and also in the Hebrides and in islands off the coast of Brittany—and they have been preserved, thanks to their sanctity or their isolation, as examples of a mode of building which was common when Christianity reached the west. Some clochauns in the Dingle peninsula, Co. Kerry, have been erected within living memory, but we also know that this type of construction is far older than Christianity in Ireland, that it was already two millennia old when Christian converts adopted it for their dwellings and their oratories. It is probable that some of the megalith-builders lived in clochauns and that their magnificent corbelled tombs have alone survived because they

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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were buried under great cairns such as those at New Grange on the River Boyne. Clusters of ruined clochauns surrounded by old field walls litter the hillslopes of the Dingle peninsula near Fahan; but we can only guess at the age of these 'beehive farms'. Some of the large oval clochauns would give standing room to as many as sixty people. Many of the existing farms in the district have at least one round clochaun, used for keeping pigs or poultry or for storing milk or turf (Fig. 37).

In the Aran Islands both oval and circular stone-roofed buildings are to be seen, though most of them are ruined. O'Flaherty in the seventeenth century described them as being 'so ancient that nobody knows how long ago any of them was made'.[1] The oval houses measure up to 21 ft. by 12 ft. internally; they are rectangular inside and some have two opposite doors (Pl. 3). Smaller round huts are also known.[2] In north-eastern Ireland, too, in north Louth and south-east Down, both round and square clochauns have been constructed down to recent times for housing pigs and poultry: a few are still in use.[3] The corbelled pigsty is known also in Wales,[4] and has been recorded in Caithness and the Orkney Islands.[5] Very similar corbelled buildings attached to old farms on Dartmoor are said to have been used as ash houses, for holding the embers taken from the fire at night.[6] One example, now used as a chicken house, is described as a winnowing hut.

Other parts of western and southern Europe can show both ancient and recent examples of corbelled constructions, though most of them, in so far as such a timeless style can be dated, were probably erected within the last two or three centuries, and some of them are known to have been built within living memory. They are found, either in ruins or serving as shelters or as animal- and tool-houses, in south France, especially in and around the Central Plateau, in Spain, Portugal and Majorca, in the heel of Italy, in the western Balkans and in Crete, where the mountain dairies appear to be very similar to the stone

[1] R. O'Flaherty, *H'Ier Connaught* (1684), 68.
[2] Å. Campbell, *Folk-Liv*, 1938, 173–96; G. H. Kinahan, *P.R.I.A.*, 10, 25
[3] R. H. Buchanan, *U.J.A.*, 19 (1956), 92–112.
[4] I. C. Peate, *The Welsh House* (1944), 42.
[5] A. Mitchell, *The Past in the Present*, 71.
[6] *Trans. Plymouth Institute*, XVIII (1944), 34.

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FIG. 37. Clochauns. (1) Oval house, Aran Island. (2) Hut, Skellig Michael. (3) Poultry house, Dingle. (4, 5) Pigsties, Co. Down. (6) Sweat-house, Co. Leitrim.

171 booley huts and shielings of Ireland and the Hebrides. The corbelled buildings of Vaucluse, in the mountains behind Avignon, are both round and rectangular, the latter bearing a striking resemblance to Irish oratories of the type of Gallarus,

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Co. Kerry, which is believed to date from the sixth or seventh century. Whether or not the origin of this style of building in western Europe should be placed, as I am inclined to believe, in the megalithic period, there can be no doubt that it represents, in various parts of the Mediterranean-Atlantic route, the survival of an ancient method of building. It has had a long life in exposed hilly districts where suitable materials lay to hand, especially where the interests of simple shepherds and cattlemen were dominant. Villages of houses with domed or conical stone or mud-brick roofs are a feature of south-east Italy and Syria, and of the dry belt stretching eastwards to India.

Some of the Co. Kerry farmyard clochauns are still used for storing milk; their thick walls are admirable for maintaining even temperatures. Their association with the pig may also be an archaic feature, for the pig was perhaps the first domesticated animal to be brought to Ireland, and although much altered in breed, it still thrives best in warm, draught-proof surroundings recalling the sultry jungles of its original south-east Asiatic home. The well-worn phrase about 'the gentleman that pays the rent' not only summarizes the role of the pig in recent historic times but carries a humorous hint of the veneration in which the pig was once held in southern and western Europe. Here archaeologists have postulated an early Neolithic matriarchal 'swine-culture', vestiges of which would explain the fact that the pig was the only cult animal of the oldest of the Greek mysteries, the Eleusinian.[1] Later pork became the favourite food of both the Roman and Celtic worlds. In parts of Ireland the pig is driven into the house for luck on May morning, and the pigsty figures in a strange ritual for certain cures, e.g., a sufferer from mumps should be led with an ass-halter three times round the sty! Further, there is surely a supernatural quality in an animal which is reputed to be able to see the wind! In many parts of the British Isles, especially in Scotland, it is unlucky to speak of a pig when fishing at sea. Superstitions about the pig are numerous in Scotland, and in the Highlands there was formerly a tabu against keeping pigs and eating pork. This was apparently true also of those parts of the north of Ireland which have had close connections with the Western Isles.

[1] C. O. Sauer, *Agricultural Origins and Dispersals*, 37.

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KILNS AND CLOCHAUNS

In discussing the association of pigs and clochauns, which ● 343 may well have reached Ireland together, reference must be made to a curious variety of underground 'outhouse', the stone-built souterrain, which is frequently found attached to ancient farmsteads of the Dark Ages. Many thousands have been recorded from all parts of the country, and they have their counterparts in Scotland, Cornwall and western France. Stripped of their cover of earth, the chambers which are incorporated in many souterrains would resemble free-standing clochauns. The long galleries which are perhaps the most characteristic element in souterrains could have originated as passages into the buried chambers. Some of the chambers may have served as pigsties, but it is a more plausible theory that these structures, long regarded as refuge places, were primarily storage places, designed to maintain an even temperature for keeping food and especially milk products. The custom of building souterrains, which must have called for considerable labour and skill, seems to have stopped, after a long life, before the early Middle Ages. We do not know what cultural factors were responsible for this change of custom, or what forms of storage took the place of the 'coves', but the change marks one aspect of the decline of the old Gaelic world of rath and tuath which had passed its zenith by the tenth century. The practice of building underground storage places, however, did not entirely die out. K. Danaher has recorded stone-lined structures in Donegal, associated with still remembered booley-sites, which are said to have [251] been used for storing butter.[1] One wonders whether the custom of burying butter in the bogs (Chapter XIV) was generally adopted when souterrains were no longer built.

The souterrains, whatever their original purpose, have occasionally been pressed into service as hiding places for outlaws, for illegal possessions or small livestock. It is known that the Irish, in the worst days of landlordism, were in the habit of hiding their stock to avoid confiscation when they were in arrears of rent. Some examples, which had not been opened within living memory, were found, when entered, to reek strongly of animals. And I know one souterrain in Co. Antrim which is littered with the remains of home-made bombs dating

[1] K. Danaher, *J.R.S.A.I.*, 75 (1945), 204–12.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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from 'the troubles' of the early nineteen-twenties. Souterrains have also been used for other illegal activities which were enjoyed irrespective of political party, such as the making of illicit whiskey—poteen—an activity which is not yet entirely suppressed and which called for secrecy. I have more than once been shown specially-made underground hiding-holes where the poteen-makers went to earth when the gaugers were scented.

In the category of temporary shelters we place the wretched 'fever-huts' erected to isolate victims of infectious diseases in the famine years. We cannot wonder that no detailed descriptions are to be found, but the account of a structure of 'turf built up in the form of a cone, with an entrance scarcely large enough for a dog to crawl through'[1] hints that some of these huts presented features of interest to the ethnographer. Temporary windbreaks erected by turf-cutters are also of considerable interest. One which I saw in Co. Fermanagh (Fig. 38)

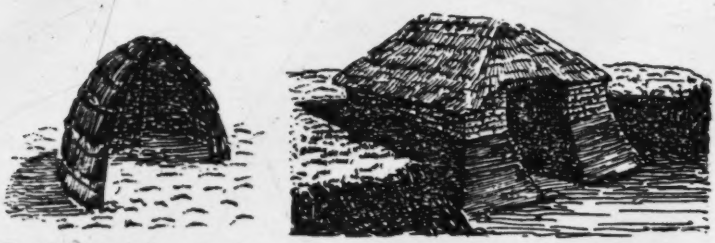

FIG. 38. Bog shelters, Co. Fermanagh. Left, for turf-cutters; right, partly dug out of the bog, for calves.

was built of birch rods bent over and neatly thatched with branches and rushes. The construction of animal shelters in great variety, too, built of sods or wattles, doubtless perpetuates skills once devoted to human habitations. I illustrate in Fig. 39 an outhouse with a solid hipped roof, known as a flat roof.

Unusual, because so far as I know confined to Achill Island, are little soot-houses erected for the special purpose of manufacturing supplies of soot and ashes as fertilizers. It is probable that we have to deal with a custom which has died out elsewhere and has maintained itself here in insular isolation. It will

[1] *The Saxon in Ireland* (1851), 143.

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343 387 be recalled that Achill was the last Irish home of booleying, and there may be some connection between the two practices, the soot-houses being the diminutive descendants of the winter dwellings whose roofs, on this theory, were stripped in spring in the days when the whole family migrated to the summer pastures. At any rate the soot-house season runs from October to May, that is the winter half-year. In the Hebrides it was customary to strip the soot-laden thatch of the black-houses annually for use as manure, and the roof was left without a smoke-hole to encourage the deposit of soot. The smoke 'oozes out over the whole roof, giving the house, when seen from a distance, the general appearance of a dung-heap in warm wet weather. The object of the roof is . . . to accumulate soot.'[1]

FIG. 39. Soot house, Achill Island; animal shelter with walls of whins and 'flat roof', Co. Cavan.

The soot-huts are rectangular gabled structures, measuring some ten by five feet externally and about eight feet high. They are built either out in the fields, where peat and sods are at hand, or near the farms, in which case they often serve in summer as hen-houses. The low side-walls are of dry-stone construction though when built in the fields they are more usually of sods: the entrance, in the gable, is only some two-and-a-half to three feet high. The roof structure is of the simplest, consisting of a ridge pole against which bits of driftwood serving as rafters rest without ties of any kind, the whole being kept in place by a great thickness of sods laid horizontally, the lowest layer resting on the thick wall-tops. At the end of harvest the huts

[1]A. Mitchell, *The Past in the Present* (1880), 53.

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are repaired and re-roofed with sods, and turf fires lit inside are kept smouldering with wet sods until the spring, when the huts are half-full of ashes and the soot-laden roof-sods are ready to collapse. The roof is then broken up and the soot and ashes spread on the ridges as potato manure (Fig. 39).

Although I know of no parallel in other parts of Ireland it seems likely that the custom of removing the roof-covering of the winter-house was once fairly general, at any rate in houses of the old Achill type, which in many details closely resembled the Hebridean black-house. I should be inclined to correlate the custom with the roped style of thatching, which betrays little of the care of other styles and in the old form where the ropes were weighted by hanging stones had a distinctly ephemeral appearance. Where sods were used for walls as well as roofs the whole house would have become a convenient source of fertilizers for the infield. This may be the explanation of the remark made by Dr. Madden that in the south of Ireland 'cottar houses of dirt, sticks and straw were generally removed once a year'.[1] There are indications met with in excavations of houses in Dark Age raths that reconstructions were more frequent than would be justified by ordinary wear and tear. In Sutherland, down to the early nineteenth century, sod-houses were abandoned periodically and pulled down to be utilized as manure, a new hut being erected near by. In this instance the cause was said to be that the accumulation of filth had rendered the place uninhabitable,[2] but this underestimates the tolerance of the Gael. The soot-houses, at any rate, seem to perpetuate old custom, and one thinks back to the earliest days of agriculture when crops were sown in the highly productive soils of newly burnt woodland. Faith in the use of fire persisted longer than the woods. Burning the land, we shall see in Chapter XI, was a very general practice down to the famine years when rough pasture was being reclaimed for potato-growing.

We come now to a group of stone structures built to serve as kilns for drying or burning. The drying-kilns were principally needed for drying corn before it was ground, though flax-drying kilns were also required in the days when the fibre was extracted

[1]Dr. Madden, *Reflections and Resolutions* (1738).
[2]Quoted in F. T. Smith, *The Land of Britain*, Part 3, Sutherland.

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343 by hand. The corn-drying kiln is a culture-trait clearly adapted
251 to the climatic conditions of the Atlantic coasts of Europe. In extreme cases, as in the Faroe Islands—where even barley does not ripen fully—the ears are kiln-dried before thrashing, but the purpose of the Irish kilns was to harden the thrashed grain before grinding. They can be traced back archaeologically to the last centuries B.C. and on present evidence their introduction may be linked chronologically with grain-storage pits and with the rotary quern. Thus the custom of parching the grain in the straw would be a survival of an older culture layer associated with the saddle-quern and the mortar and possibly with harvesting by pulling the corn by the roots.

One early type of kiln was made of wattles plastered with clay, and was perhaps used like an oven, being heated before the corn was put in it to dry, but those which have come down into recent times were stone-lined pits into which a long flue was led. The fuel used was peat. It is stated that down to famine times every townland in some parts of the country had its kiln, though in other parts they went out of use long ago when landlords, following Anglo-Norman custom, insisted that all corn should be ground at the mill. In Co. Cavan for example, 'every estate has its commill and the tenantry is bound under severe penalty to grind their corn thereat and pay toll'.[1] These
[376] watermills should be distinguished from the native clackmills, built over little streams and driven by small horizontal wheels. They were characteristically held in joint ownership, as were the kilns. The Mayo kiln is described as resembling a large tobacco pipe, the circular stone-lined bowl being dug into a sloping bank and the horizontal stem or flue emerging lower down the slope. A bee-hive cap of timber and thatch was the only part visible. In it a straw-covered wattled hatch gave access to the kiln floor, a wooden frame half-way down the bowl of the pipe, on which thrashed sheaves were spread, heads to centre. The grain, laid on this, took about twenty-four hours to dry. The taste of the oatmeal made from grain so dried was said to be delicious.[2] A man who had seen a similar kiln working in Co. Antrim told me that the corn was laid on a linen sheet

[1] C. Coote, *Cavan* (1802), 251.
[2] H. T. Knox, *P.R.I.A.*, *26* (1906–7), 265.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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resting on a well-prepared bed of drawn straw spread on a hurdle, and he recalled the phrase 'soft as kiln bedding' to illustrate the care devoted to the operation. The Gaelic language has quite an extensive vocabulary describing every detail of the floor and the bedding of a corn-kiln. Because of the risk of fire, the Laws stipulated that the kiln must not be placed within so many paces of the dwelling house.

Lint-kilns, for drying flax after it had been taken from the retting dams, were in general use in Ulster in the days of hand-scutching, and a few half-ruined specimens are still in existence. As with corn-kilns—and lime-kilns—they were of two kinds, which may be termed pot-kilns and pipe-kilns. The former are described in Co. Armagh as 'small sod buildings, left open at the top . . . built by the sides of fences near the cabins: they are four or five feet in diameter, and have a hurdle of sticks placed across them at a convenient height (about four feet) on which a small quantity of flax is spread to dry over a turf fire'.[1] The stone-built kilns, known in Co. Tyrone as 'farrows' were similar in construction to the 'tobacco pipe' corn-kilns. The flax, well shaken and loose, was placed on end on a wattled platform set across the bowl of the pipe. When dried it was beaten on a melling-stone with a heavy wooden mell until every stalk was flattened and it then passed to the hand-scutcher.

As the corn-drying kiln has been superseded by the kiln attached to the country grist-mill, so the small lime-kiln has given way, over most of the country, to the large quarry-kiln. At the same time coal has replaced turf as a fuel. The little circular pot-kiln of sods or stones filled with alternate layers of turf and limestone may be met with in the west, but in general the home-burning of lime did not long survive the Great Famine. Down to that time, wherever limestone could be obtained, almost every farm or farm cluster had a lime-kiln. It was the importation of guano and later of artificial manure that put an end to a most advantageous practice. The application of lime to acid soils is a comparatively recent practice, but one likes to think that the little pot-kiln was in use long ago to burn lime or sea-shells for the whitewash with which the mud houses were lightened and brightened. Kelp-kilns, similarly (see Chapter

[1] I. Binns, *Miseries and Beauties* (1837), I, 178.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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XVI), had their great days in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but small-scale wrack-burning is far older than this. In the later eighteenth century, when framed windows and brick chimneys became fashionable in the more prosperous lowland farms, the bricks were locally burnt in circular kilns plastered with clay.

Another class of outbuilding, allied to the clochaun in construction, is the stone sweat-house, the Irish version of the Turkish bath, which the Germans, indeed, call the Irish bath. There is a theory that the idea reached Ireland with Christian missionaries who were accustomed to Roman practices, but heat-treatment as a cure is so widespread throughout the world (cf. the sweat-houses of Finland and pre-Columbian California) that one thinks of remoter origins. What is certain is that they were visited for cures within living memory in several parts of Ireland. In west Cavan twenty-five sweat-houses have been listed in one district, and many more are known to have been destroyed. A French traveller of the late eighteenth century observed that 'wherever there are four or five cabins near each other there is sure to be a sweating-house'.[1] And old people in Cavan confirm that every four or five families once shared a sweat-house, in which sweating cures were taken in summer and autumn (Fig. 57, 6).

The sweat-house is a dry-stone corbelled structure, measuring internally from four to seven feet in diameter and rather less in height. A low lintelled doorway is the only means of access though some specimens have a roughly constructed chimney flue to allow the smoke to escape. This was closed with sods during the treatment, as was the door. The fire of turf—straw and bracken seem also to have been used—had been kept burning inside for a day or two previously. The floor, normally an earthen floor though some examples were cobbled or paved, was then swept clean and strewn with green rushes. On these, or on grass sods or low stools which they took in with them, from two to as many as six or seven persons would sit, naked and sweating profusely. After half an hour or so they would emerge and cool themselves either in a near-by stream or with a bucket

[1]De Latocnaye, *A Frenchman's Walk through Ireland* (1796–97). Ed. J. Stevenson (1917), 198.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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of water. I was told on Rathlin Island that eligible girls would take a sweating bath to clear their complexions before the annual visit to the Lammas Fair at Ballycastle on the mainland. They were in demand also during kelp-burning operations—a notoriously filthy occupation. Not all sweat-houses were built of stone. Wood-Martin quotes accounts of some which were dug into an earth bank and 'finished with sods', while others were excavated in turf banks.[1] He also records that water was sometimes poured on stones inside the sweat-house, 'thus converting it into a vapour- as well as a sweat-bath'.[2]

More intimately linked with the house is the turf-shelter, the Irish equivalent of the English coal-shed. In the drier eastern part of the country a built shelter is not necessary, and the peats, skilfully built into a huge turf-stack protected from the driving rains by a wall or gable, perhaps improve by exposure to the winds, but in the wetter west unless the turf is under cover it must be dried in small quantities in the loft or by the fire before burning. In parts of Kerry the turf is stored in large clochauns: elsewhere narrow oblong or oval stone enclosures are erected, their walls loosely built to allow the wind to blow through. The peat-store or cleit of St. Kilda was similar—an oblong corbelled stone building with open joints.

The well is another essential item of equipment of farm or clachan, and it is often provided with a corbelled stone cover. Since springs are abundant, except in bare limestone country, the wells are not deep and few are fitted with windlasses. In their absence quite elaborate ramps with stone steps are sometimes needed to obtain access to the water, and the whole structure being roofed, some examples (for instance in the south-east of Co. Down) are considerable architectural feats (Fig. 40). In the limestone districts the woman of the house may have to walk as much as half a mile to carry drinking water from a dip-well. It is now carried in buckets but was formerly transported in stave-built piggins balanced on the head. The peasant makes a virtue of necessity by asserting that almost every spring well yields 'the finest water in all Ireland, and never runs dry'. Wells are regarded as chancy things, not to be

[1] Wood-Martin, *Elder Faiths*, II (1902), 166.
[2] ibid., 165.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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343 lightly meddled with, and if the water is not as good as usual
312 you will be told, in the phrase used for an ailing human being, that the well is 'not *at* itself at all'.

FIG. 40. Well-covers, Co. Cavan and Co. Down.

343 Finally we come to a miscellaneous assortment of outbuild-
235 ings and shelters built to house various animals and birds. Elaborate pigeon houses (ducats) designed to house hundreds of birds seem to be confined to the east and south coasts and to areas planted by English or Scots. They are no doubt manorial in origin but some existing examples were built in the early nineteenth century, though they are no longer in use. In these areas the smaller farms may have little pigeon houses made for a dozen birds, and the humblest stable is likely to have a pigeon hole or two in the gable. The birds formerly nested in hanging nests of plaited straw.

343 Cavities in the thick walls about many old farms were built
231 as dog-kennels or duck-houses, and simple shelter holes ('boles' in Ulster) were intended to house assorted three-legged iron pots (Fig. 32). An interesting variant is the bee-bole, a shelter for the bee-skep, a few examples of which have been observed in eastern Ireland.[1]

[1]R. M. Duruz and E. E. Crane, *English Bee Boles* (1953). (National Beekeeping Museum Pamphlet No. 1.)

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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hands into cakes and piled against a wall until dry enough to carry home.[1]

After lying spread on the ground for a week or two the turves are footed, that is a dozen or so are put to lean together in the shape of a pitched roof, to catch the wind (Fig. 64). This is work for women and for children, who are, in some districts, given a week's holiday from school. Through the months of June and July and often into August there is constant coming and going as the peats are turned and built into larger and larger piles, turn-foots, castles, rickles, lumps and clamps—the names and the shapes show considerable regional variation—until they can be ricked or stacked on the bog ready to be carried to the farms as opportunity offers. The wind is the main drying agent, and once dried the peats acquire a waterproof skin. A well-built stack will throw off the rain, but it is usual in the west to thatch with rushes and add a coping of sods or stones against the wind. Open-sided turfsheds specially built of wood or stone are the exception rather than the rule. A favourite place for the stack is against the house gable, where it provides a protective warmth even before the turf is burnt. The fuel is taken into the house in baskets, creels or wights, and a small supply is kept handy by the fireside or stored, as in the Aran Islands, on the kitchen loft (Pl. 9, 2).

FIG. 64. Stages in the drying and stacking of turf (not to scale; the stack, right, is about 9 feet high).

Some lowland bogs are too waterlogged to be cut into turves, and if no slane-turf is available the black turf-mud is moulded by hand into bricks or balls which are stacked to dry. In some counties, for instance Meath and Cavan, mud turf is highly prized and its preparation follows a well-ordered routine. After

[1] C. R. Browne and A. C. Haddon, *The Aran Islands*.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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Pyrenees and in Africa, but the flail, apparently spreading through western Europe in post-Roman times, in time replaced it almost everywhere, to be in turn displaced by the mechanical thrasher. Thus the sound of the flail has almost gone from the countryside. The best thrashing place is the floor of the barn above the byre, with its opposite doors to draw the wind and advertise the flailer's industry. Such barns, however, were not built outside the planted districts before agrarian changes and improvements spread in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Ireland knows nothing of the carefully built thrashing floors of England and Scandinavia. At best on the farms lacking a barn a thrashing board was sometimes kept, a square wooden platform raised a few inches off the ground. A good thrashing floor should bend to meet the flail, and in Scandinavia, for instance, great pains were taken in the old days to construct floors which would make the flails sing. They were occasionally strung with wires, and to magnify the echo of clay floors a horse's skull was buried under each corner.[1] It has been thought that this purpose was secondary to the luck it was hoped would follow from what was originally a foundation sacrifice. In Ireland traditions of the burying of horses' skulls under the floors of dwelling houses are both widespread and well authenticated. The usual explanation again is that this gives the house an echo, but it is also said to be lucky, and Sean O'Sullivan concludes that the custom of burying skulls began as a substitute for foundation sacrifices.[2] In Armagh 'the frontal bones of a horse's head are regarded as being peculiarly sonsie; they were often buried in barn floors and under the thresholds of dwelling houses for that reason.'[3]

In time, the expressed object came to be to magnify the music of the singing flails as well as that of the ballad-singing and dancing before the fire. The space between the doors of the old style kitchen-byre, it will be recalled, was a favourite thrashing place in times past. The Briget's Crosses above the door would have blessed the thrashing as well as the cattle. It

[1]Albert Sandkelf, *Singing Flails* (Folklore Fellows Communications, Helsinki, No. 136), (1949).
[2]Seán Ó Súilleabháin, *J.R.S.A.I.*, 75 (1945), 45–52.
[3]J. Donaldson, *Upper Fews in 1838*, 77.

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243 789 is worth noticing that symbols in the form of a swastika, but including also circles, pentagrams and horses, were formerly cut as protective devices in the beams of barns in Scandinavia. Some of the designs are reminiscent of the art of the Bronze Age.

243 An Irish verse giving the four essentials of a good thrashing, collected in Co. Armagh, runs in translation:

[539]

A hand-staff of holly,
A souple of hazel,
A single sheaf,
And a clean floor.

This is where the besom of heather or bent comes in: it is still preferred to the sweeping-broom for a clay floor or to get into the joins of boards or cobbles. Thrashing was a daily job, carried out on well-run farms night and morning before the cattle were fed. It was held that the cattle throve best on freshly thrashed oats, and the storage of grain would anyhow have been difficult where there were no barns.[1] For this reason, too, the level 'street' in front of the house, or even the public road was often the most suitable floor available. The thrashing was usually done on a strong linen sheet. Publicity as well as a steady echoing beat seem to have been the desired aims. Everywhere prestige has attached to a noisy thrashing, and partly no doubt for self-aggrandisement a solitary thrasher would beat with his feet to make the noise of two. Everywhere too the sound of the flail has been turned into jingles and rustic rhymes. They did not accompany the work itself because it was too noisy and too exhausting to allow talking or singing. The flails' beaters made their own merry music; was it, one wonders, originally intended to drive away evil spirits from the precious food supply?

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222 824 In this chapter we have confined ourselves to some of the things that were made at home out of materials that lay to hand. To describe the utilization of all the lesser plants that have

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[1]Mr. A. T. Lucas, however, has described traditional outdoor granaries, now restricted to west Cork, constructed of thick straw ropes, which when completed resemble round stacks (*Gwerin*, I (1956), 2–20). Mr. V. B. Proudfoot calls my attention to the similar 'corn bykes' of Caithness (*P.S.A.S.* (1952), 156–7).

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come across surviving examples of these ancient devices. The iron 'cribs' associated with modern salmon weirs, however, appear to derive from wattled traps. And the long conical 'coghill' nets in which the eels are caught in the weirs of the Bann, the Shannon and (until recently) the Erne, are shaped like weels and indeed they are sometimes built up of a series of cones. The fine meshed 'tail' of the net is made to open and the eels, nowadays, are poured directly into submerged tanks. A detail suggestive of long custom is that the 'skiver' with which the tail is closed in the coghills of the weirs at Portna on the Bann consists of a perforated rib-bone of horse or cow. The pin is attached to a cord, which is wound round the end of the net and secured by thrusting the pin into the windings. The walls of the weirs are often still built of wattles, and the old style of weir on the Erne consists of a base of large stones into which the wattled superstructure is thrust.[1]

The wattles are known on the Bann as *skeaghs*: of the six weirs now fishing there four are of the traditional type and two have been modernized. At Athlone on the Shannon there were twenty-two eel weirs in the early seventeenth century, and nearly all were still working in the nineteenth century: a single weir is now fished there.[2] The eel weirs of the River Erne had been reduced to five when they were abandoned owing to the recent construction of a dam for the Ballyshannon hydro-electric scheme. The Bann silver eel fisheries are probably the largest of their kind in western Europe, and it is significant that the Bann is one of the richest rivers in Europe for archaeological discoveries ranging in date from the Mesolithic to the early medieval period. Both salmon and eels have now become money-crops and the catches are exported. Already in the eighteenth century Irish salt salmon was exported in considerable quantities to America. The ice-house in which salmon used to be preserved is one of the many ruined buildings to be seen about the decaying houses of the gentry, and most country houses also had their fish ponds.

Among the common folk eels are esteemed only by the folk who catch them, legally or otherwise, but they were formerly

[1] A. E. J. Went, *J.R.S.A.I.*, 75 (1945), 213–23.
[2] A. E. J. Went, *J.R.S.A.I.*, 80 (1950), 146–54.

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829 come ashore in the future, for his use of the term poverty when describing Inis Beag life in a series of articles. The islanders, however, constantly complain of their indigence privately and deprecate it and are embarrassed by it in the presence of strangers. Girls and young women are particularly disparaging, and elders are puzzled by this attitude because the lot of youth is so much easier than was that of their mothers and grandmothers. Those persons who extol island existence usually do so in a defensive manner; after conceding that goods are in short supply, albeit "no one suffers from want of food or clothing," they go on to stress the healthy climate of the island, the freedom and independence that they enjoy, the sanctity of Inis Beag and its many saints of the past, and the strength of Catholic belief. Sometimes the advocate is followed by a denunciation of urban life, where these essential characteristics are lacking, or by a recounting of the difficulties being encountered by a relative just arrived in Boston or London.

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233 The subsistence economy of Inis Beag always has been dominated by agricultural pursuits, contrary to frequent assertions by writers that farming was subsidiary to fishing two generations ago. Most householders own land on which they grow potatoes and other vegetables, grass, and sometimes sally rods, and where they pasture cattle, sheep, goats, horses, and asses. Potatoes are the staple crop, and after they are harvested the land usually is seeded with grass and used as pasturage for a number of years before being replanted. Indigenous soils bearing grass at the back of the island also serve as pasturage, and horses and asses at times
[262] are permitted to roam the trails and common land to forage whatever they can from the meager flora there. Supplementing potatoes in the diet are various vegetables, milk from cows and nanny goats, meat from island sheep and poultry,
[342] fish, and other foods, many of which are imported and sold in the shops. Rye is
[343] grown for thatching houses and contiguous outbuildings, as well as barns located
[493] south of the terrace crest, and sally rods are used to weave several types of containers. The only vehicles in Inis Beag are three two-wheeled carts employed to transport heavy loads, such as building stones, along the rough and narrow trails. Most householders own asses or horses, often ridden, which carry burdens in baskets
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28 or pull carts. Other subsistence activities are knitting, weaving, crocheting, tailoring, shoemaking, and net making, although the last skill almost has died out.

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[437] A slowly expanding cash economy features the export of cattle and sheep reared or fattened in the island and of surplus potatoes, the collection of seaweed for extraction of its iodine content at a mainland factory, the manufacture of
[28] craft objects, and the keeping of tourists in private homes. Among the craft commodities produced are cable-knit sweaters, miniature *curach*, stockings knitted at the local factory in the coast guard station, and articles of clothing worn by the folk—woven belts, cowhide shoes, and shawls. These goods are sold both to visitors
[667] and to middlemen who resell them in Ireland and export them abroad. The cash economy is buttressed considerably by government subsidies of many sorts and
[651] by remittances from emigrant kin. Not only are income and property taxes not
[428] collected in Inis Beag, but rents are extremely low, both of which conditions rep-
[124] resent indirect government subsidization. Income information is as difficult to come by as data concerning pagan supernatural beliefs, disputes, and sexual atti-

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Figure 7. Harvesting spuds near the lake below Terrace Village

seed is thrown out by hand and the top soil turned over by spade to cover it, a task often shared by a man and his offspring. The farmer who wishes to use a plot only for growing hay usually will seed it during the spring after it has yielded spuds and will not permit animals to graze on it until it has been cut and the hay stored. No further seeding is required after the initial one, even though ten years may elapse before potatoes once again are planted.

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The tools employed in cutting and stacking hay are the sickle, called a "reaping hook," the scythe, the pitchfork, and the rake. Most are imported, but a few men own handmade rakes whose parts are wooden and fitted together. The farmers substitute wide brimmed felt hats for their usual caps when haying, and do so again a month later when "pulling" rye; the hat is purported to be cooler than the cap and affords protection to the neck of the wearer when he bends over for long spells under a hot sun. Many folk claim that cutting hay is the most strenuous of their jobs on land or sea, but the men work slowly and rest often, just as they do when engaged in other arduous tasks, some of which appear to the outsider to demand a greater output of energy than manipulating a sickle or scythe. Once cut, hay is raked into parallel rows across the field for drying, then formed into cocks, known as "saving the hay," by hand or using a rake, "fork," or scythe. It is possible to stack hay into cocks 24 hours after cutting it, then to transport it to barns and outbuildings after a like period of time (see Fig. 8), but rain and the press of other duties can prolong the operation for as long as two weeks. Seeds for autumn planting are shaken from the hay on the floor of the storage building before the crop is stacked away to furnish winter fodder.

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Figure 8. Transporting hay to an outbuilding

249 Those islanders who dwell in thatched houses or who own other buildings which are thatched grow rye, as do a few farmers who use it as fodder. It is planted in recently dug potato fields at the same time as grass and is ready for harvesting the next August. Rye for thatching is pulled rather than cut, and compressed into [342] small bundles which are propped against fences for drying. Pulling is preferred because grass and weeds can be separated out, and the roots will furnish friction [343] to keep the bundles from slipping when they are placed on the roof later. After drying, the bundles are carried to barns or outbuildings to be flailed, winnowed, and stored until used a month or two afterward. Flailing is done by striking the tops of the bundled plants against a stone placed a foot from an indoor wall, in such a way that the seeds are separated and collected at the base of the wall. Later the grain is spread on a flagging and winnowed by allowing handfuls of seed to [246] fall to the rock surface so that wind blows away the chaff. Rye used as fodder is planted with grass and cut when "green" at the same time that hay is cut, and is handled in almost the same way as the latter.

Care of Livestock

175 The export of fish, kelp, pigs, cattle, and sheep accounted for 90 percent 434 of the income of Inis Beag folk in 1893, as reported by the Congested Districts 437 Board. The sale of cattle and sheep ranked last, for at that time indigenous soils [311] were not adequate either in extent or grass yield to support many livestock, and 178 fields on the terraces were used mostly for farming. But over the past 70 years
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fishing season, will not use up so much time getting to and from the pastures. Other reasons for shifting cows are that the village wells are more dependable than the springs at the back of the island during occasional summer dry spells, and cows when "tormented" by insects can run about the terrace fields more safely than they can the rockier and more fissured indigenous and improved plots above. Milking is done between eight thirty and ten o'clock in the morning and four thirty and six in the afternoon during the winter, and an hour or two later in the summer. When milking, the farmer crouches at the right side of the beast and holds a pail with his left hand while drawing one teat at a time with his right. He murmurs to the cow in Irish to keep it pacified, and is ready to move swiftly should the animal suddenly shift its position.

To encourage cattle breeding, the government subsidizes the construction of reservoirs at the back of the island for collecting rain water, and of barns and outbuildings for storing hay, rye, potatoes, and farming and fishing equipment. The typical reservoir is placed in an area surrounded by actual or potential grazing land located at a considerable distance from the nearest spring. It is composed of a cemented stone platform with a slanting concave surface which drains into a rectangular shaped tank. Barns and outbuildings are small stone structures, usually thatched, which are single roomed and doored and may have one or two small windows. The barns, like the reservoirs, are placed within easy access of fields used for pasturage.

Sheep are reared in Inis Beag to furnish wool, as well as to be sold and slaughtered for local consumption. They demand little care, as they are allowed to graze in undeveloped pastures and to obtain water from rain filled depressions in the pavement and from plants that they devour. Kept by their owners for five or six years and then disposed of, they are sheared once a year between May and July. There are white, brown, and black haired varieties, and between six and eight pounds of wool can be procured from an animal every shearing. If a householder possesses a large herd, he may choose to sell some of his lambs when they are six months old, and in August many lambs are shipped from Inis Beag on the steamer. Although some folk from time to time slaughter their own sheep to provide meat for the tables, several householders maintain large herds and specialize in selling lamb and mutton to visitors and fellow islanders.

All Inis Beag homes have at least one dog and most of them have a cat. These animals perform certain services and act as pets. At the time walls were low at the back of the island, dogs were employed to round up sheep, and they also aided their owners hunt rabbits along the rock piled shore of the west sound, when the meat of this animal was eaten more commonly than it is today. Now, their duties are restricted to warning of the approach of strangers and chasing chickens out of the kitchen. Cats are kept to catch mice, and their presence on the premises is sufficient to keep rats from approaching the house and outbuildings. They are treated less well than dogs, but both dogs and cats are given little affection and often are not fed enough. It is true that some islanders are strongly attached to their pets and provide them with adequate care, but they are the exceptions. A man devoted to his dog will be followed about the island by the animal, and a desired trait in a dog is that it will not show interest in persons outside of the

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choosing. The kiss of the newly united pair, which in most of the Western world terminates the marriage ceremony, is lacking in Inis Beag, and after leaving the chapel the couple stand for some time in the yard to receive congratulations from guests and others who have attended the wedding, until the procession forms once again to walk to the home of the groom.

Once there, the groom's mother stands on the threshold and places the wedding cake for a moment on the head of her son, to compound the luck already gained by borrowed tie and shawl and donation of shillings. The newlyweds dance together alone before the first dance figure is formed, but they spend most of the night seated side by side, talking to well wishers, while music, song, and dance joyously abound in the adjoining kitchen. Presents are given the couple only by kin who have emigrated and by outsiders who have known the two long and well; the same tradition holds true at Christmas among older children and adults. The wedding party, as the *ceamhnas*, may go on night after night, and so may the third party making up the marriage cycle a month later—the "dragging home," which is celebrated at the bride's former house. The term dragging home is employed when either the vernacular or English are spoken, but the word wedding, and its Irish equivalent *bainis*, are used interchangeably in both tongues. Although the bride must not enter her parents' house for a month after the nuptials, she is free to visit with them elsewhere.

The Family and Kinship

There are 79 inhabitable houses in Inis Beag, although many others of hoary vintage still stand and have been converted into outbuildings. Only 71 of these are lived in by the folk, however; 6 of the other 8 (1 of which houses the Dane) recently have been deserted by emigrants, and the remaining 2 are lived in by the curate and the headmaster. The following is a chart showing the categories of personnel occupying the 71 domiciles:

Number of Households	*Personnel*
30	Husband, wife, and offspring
5	Husband, wife, offspring, and the husband's widowed mother
4	Husband and wife who are childless
4	Husband, wife, offspring, and both parents of the husband
3	Husband, wife, offspring, and the husband's unmarried sister
2	Husband and wife who are childless and both parents of the husband
1	Husband, wife, offspring, and the husband's father who is a widower
1	Husband, wife, offspring, and both parents of the husband and his unmarried sister
1	Husband and wife whose offspring have emigrated
1	Widow and her unmarried offspring
5	Single man (bachelor)
2	Brother and sister both of whom are unmarried
2	Two brothers and a sister all of whom are unmarried
2	Widower and his unmarried offspring
1	Two bachelor brothers
1	Bachelor and his widowed sister-in-law

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three sisters, and ten of two—and they tend to visit together often and lend mutual economic and emotional support.

When a man marries, his parents relinquish the holding, and its direction passes into the hands of the newlyweds. Arensberg and Kimball talk of the "west room" complex, which may exist in many parts of peasant Ireland but does not in Inis Beag. Houses in north and west Co. Clare "with remarkable uniformity" are aligned east and west, and on the son's marriage the old couple moves into the westernmost room "behind the hearth." This room is linked with the Celtic supernatural, for fairy paths are thought to be located along the western side of many houses, and the pagan afterworld—the Isle of the Blest—is a sunken land mass in the nearby western sea (Arensberg and Kimball 1940:134–136). In Inis Beag, on the contrary, over one-third of the domiciles since 1841 have been aligned north and south, fairy trails are found mostly at the back of the island, and a retiring couple may choose any of three rooms (or more in modern homes) to move into. The west room of Co. Clare is called simply "the room" in Inis Beag.

Thirty-four of the 71 inhabited buildings in the island have thatched roofs (see Fig. 8), while the others are antiquated houses which lately have been renovated, mainly by replacing thatch with slate, or are newly built. The last of the traditional "cabins" or "cottages" were constructed in the 1930s, and the first of the modern ones during the 1890s—with two stories initially, and styled and subsidized by the Congested Districts Board. Old and renovated houses are rectangular in shape, are constructed of whitewashed stones with concrete floors, and have a large central kitchen with doors or half-doors to the outside both front and back. "The room" is beyond the kitchen at one end of the building, and two bedrooms (one in the most ancient cabins) are at the other. Lofts for sleeping are in the gable of the roof above "the room" and bedrooms, and are entered by ladder or staircase from the kitchen. Fireplaces share a common wall and chimney between the kitchen and "the room," as they also may between the two bedrooms; but the kitchen hearth is the most used, and in some homes is not permitted to die out.

The space between the cottage and the low stone wall and outbuildings surrounding it is called the "street." Outbuildings at the back include a toilet and various storage sheds—for spuds and turf sods in particular, although the latter often are stacked instead against a gable of the cabin. In a portion of the street or a small field beyond the wall, a garden for vegetables is maintained for easy access. The kitchen doors of the house sometimes open into small halls in the front or back, or both, and when the weather is not too cold or blustery, the door opening to the street on the windward side is kept closed and its opposite open. In the kitchen, which is the center of family activities, are: the fireplace at which cooking is done with pot and cooking ovens hung from an iron hook; the table around which the family eats their five daily meals; the sideboard, known as a "dresser," filled with "delph"—both everyday and "best" china; the religious shrine with "blessed lamp" surrounded by religious pictures and sacred objects; and, occasionally, a "settlebed" which, when closed, serves as a bench during the daytime.

The hearth in the kitchen is indented into the wall to provide two hobs, or seats, and on a chilly or dampish day the folk will nestle inside the fireplace and sit tightly together on a bench drawn up close to the turf fire for warmth. This

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rejuvenate the moribund tradition. However, several men past the age of 40 years still are able to perform jigs, reels, hornpipes, and hop-jigs with dexterity, "when the humor is on them," and are called out at parties and in the pubs; a few women will step dance in their homes or at small social gatherings.

There is considerable evidence to suggest that the rigid body and arms of the step dancer are an early nineteenth century product of Jansenist doctrine in the church, which attempted to desexualize dancing. Most of the movement is below the hips of the dancer, and it is the feet of the performer which are watched intently by the audience, at least openly. Inis Beag men move their upper bodies and arms more than is customary on the mainland, and they are not as graceful as other Irish dancers.

Figure dancing is called "set" dancing in Ireland, and there are many such dances, each of which combines a number of simple and complex figures performed by the couples. There is only one set in Inis Beag; it bears no name and is danced by one or more groups of four couples each. The many figures of the dance are simple, and it takes about 20 minutes to complete. I have heard young dancers complain at the end of a night of the rediousness of the single set, and some of them are learning other Irish figures at language school dances—"The Walls of Limerick" and "The Bridge of Athlone," among others. The most enjoyed movement of the local set is the one at the end in which the man holds his partner closely and twirls her almost violently, sometimes for longer than is prescribed so that the musician must pause or alter his rhythm. With bodily contact between partners otherwise so limited, perhaps this figure allows the expression of repressed sexuality.

Parties

It is appropriate to describe the Inis Beag party and a festive night at the pub in this chapter, because they are esthetic as well as social events, in which are combined storytelling, music, song, and dance. Parties are very much the same, whether held in the winter or the summer or to welcome home a long departed emigrant or to "drag home" a new bride. Only two rooms of the house are utilized —the kitchen and "the room" adjoining it—and benches are placed along the walls to supplement the chairs and bed on which guests will sit. The barrel or two of stout to be served is placed in the back hall off the kitchen, if there is such a hall, or in a back corner of the kitchen, and one man is assigned the task of dispensing the drink and remaining at his post throughout the night. Another man acts as "pourer" and fills a bucket from which he pours the stout into several mugs and glasses which are circulated from man to man. A bottle of whiskey is opened and proffered only to the old men, who often sit in a group beside the fireplace and exchange anecdotes and tales. On a table in "the room" are placed bottles of wine and soft drinks to accommodate the women and non-drinkers among the men before and after refreshments are served. Sometimes an elderly woman will drink surreptitiously of the whiskey or stout, and it is customary for the musicians and those who sing and step dance the most to be awarded extra amounts of stout. Women